



# Connected Tennessee Welcomes New State Operations Manager

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*Alyson Sumerford Takes Over Role of State Operations Manager for East TN, Bringing More Than a Decade of Marketing and Project Management Experience to the Job*

**Nashville, TN** – Connected Tennessee announced today the appointment of Alyson Sumerford as East Tennessee’s State Operations Manager. In this position, Ms. Sumerford will manage Tennessee’s *Trail to Innovation*, a statewide strategy that promotes technology use and works to increase both the availability and adoption of broadband (also known as high-speed Internet) through mapping and research. She will also mobilize Connected Tennessee’s county-level technology planning groups, called eCommunity Leadership Teams, in the eastern region of Tennessee. In this role, Sumerford will help every East Tennessee county determine its current use of technology and make plans for the best ways to utilize technology in order to improve local government services and provide better healthcare and education, ultimately helping Tennessee communities remain economically strong. Sumerford takes over the role from Corey Johns, who was recently named Senior Stakeholder Relations Manager for Connected Tennessee’s parent company, Connected Nation.

“We are delighted to welcome Alyson Sumerford to our team and feel that her background and experience will bring a fresh perspective to the eCS process,” said Connected Tennessee’s executive director, Michael Ramage. “We feel confident that Alyson will build upon the solid foundation already established in East Tennessee to ensure that all East Tennessee counties are equipped with a Strategic Technology Plan that will allow them to grow and thrive in today’s technology-driven world.”

Before joining the Connected Tennessee team, Alyson served as an Account Executive and Public Relations Specialist for Davis Newman Payne Marketing Communications, Knoxville’s oldest established advertising agency. In this role, Alyson was responsible for copywriting, drafting press releases, collaborating closely with programmers, developers and clients on creating and updating websites and other interactive projects and conducting project management for both the agency and its clients.

Prior to her tenure with Davis Newman Payne, Alyson acted as director of marketing and development for William King Regional Arts Center in Abingdon, Virginia, where she provided direction and leadership in developing and implementing marketing strategies to increase regional participation and corporate donor giving. Alyson holds a B.A. in History from Roanoke College in Roanoke, Virginia. She is based in Knoxville.

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**About Connected Tennessee:** *As a public-private partnership, Connected Tennessee partners with technology-minded businesses, government entities and universities to accelerate technology in the state. The work of Connected Tennessee is made possible by support from the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development. For more information about what Connected Tennessee is doing to accelerate technology in Tennessee's communities, visit [www.connectedtennessee.org](http://www.connectedtennessee.org).*